A Word From Tim Downs - May

Gifts & Challenges

Dear Friends,
There are times in my life when something happens that causes me to see something in a new and surprising way. Perhaps it is the observation of another person looking at a part of my life that is familiar and comfortable, but to them it is exciting or new. I have been ordained in the United Church of Christ for 36 years, and have loved it, understanding its great gifts and its great challenges.
However, being a part of the United Church of Christ History and Polity class that the conference offered as our first on-line class, which was led by Kathy Clark and which ended last Saturday, was a moment for me of seeing a church I love in a new way, through new eyes. I listened to pastors and lay leaders say, "Thank you for bringing me into the church as it is supposed to be, a place where I am fully welcomed, all of me." Others commented on the level of honesty and openness where we could engage in conversations, sharing our differences without judgment, unfolding understandings that there are many paths to truth, and many understandings of Christ. I rejoiced again in the richness of a tradition like our United Church of Christ which affirms that the unity we know in Christ is not unanimity in how we express our faith and convictions. Others celebrated the uniqueness of the UCC as the only united and uniting Christian denomination in the United States.

I look forward to being with you when we gather in Knoxville June 10-12 for our Annual Meeting. At that meeting we will celebrate the new things that God is doing in the Southeast Conference. We will be introduced to new churches seeking affiliation with us, all of which have sought us out and said, "Thank you for being the kind of Christians I did not know were out there, and for whom I have been looking."

Peace,

Tim Downs

Timothy C. Downs
Conference Minister

UCC News

UCC Newsroom
Headlines from the United Church of Christ

Oklahoma City church continues legacy of dedicated member
Stephanie Telleen chose to remember Mayflower Congregational United Church of Christ in her will when she passed away, leaving her half-million dollar estate to the church. Now the Oklahoma City church will use that estate to remember Telleen for her selflessness and generosity by funding two missions close to her heart.

THE CENTER FOR PROGRESSIVE RENEWAL

Latest News
- Documents for Annual Meeting
- Lodging Information
- Workshops for the 2013 Annual Meeting
- LGBT Ministry and Advocacy in the UCC

Most Read Articles
- UCC History and Polity
- Southeast Conference UCC (SEC)
- Southeast Conference Campaign
- A Word From Tim Downs - March 2013

News Around the Conference - May

> UCC Churches Respond to Nashville Floods

The recent flooding in Nashville, while it has not had a direct impact on any of our four churches in the city, has caused significant damage to the homes of members of our churches and communities surrounding them. Holy Trinity Community UCC has responded by organizing relief efforts, clean-up crews, and fund-raisers. They are beginning to collect clothes and furniture for those whose homes have been damaged or lost. Howard Congregational UCC is concerned about reaching out to its neighborhood, the underserved north end of Nashville. The Southeast Conference Disaster Assistance Relief Team is beginning to coordinate a response, providing clean up kits and emergency assistance. At this time, collections are being taken and, in consultation with the national disaster relief offices of the UCC, we are beginning to respond more fully.

>> **Click Here** to read more of the story.
>> **Click Here** to make a donation. When making an online donation please put ***Holy Trinity Nashville Flood*** in the "Other" field.

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> Virginia-Highland Church Witnesses to the Resurrection in their Neighborhood

During Lent, the Virginia-Highland Church (A Baptist and UCC Congregation) collected photos and names of martyrs to just causes on a white wooden cross. On Easter Sunday, members and friends brought flowers to decorate the cross on the steps of the church as a witness to the resurrection for the neighborhood.

> First Church, Atlanta, Secures $2.8 Million Loan for Continued Renovations

This month, First Congregational Church, UCC, Atlanta, received word from the Cornerstone Fund of the United Church of Christ that they had been approved for a loan in the amount of $2.8 million. This money will be used along with the proceeds from the sale of a piece of land and a capital campaign to initiate the last phase of a renovation for the historic First Church building, allowing the congregation to occupy their building again. They have been worshipping in the interim in their renovated community center.

UCC News

UCC Newsroom
Headlines from the United Church of Christ

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Lifting Up... May

Wanda Bain is at Home Recovering from Illness

As Roy and Wanda Bain prepared for his retirement from ministry at Lanett Congregational Christian Church in April, Wanda became ill. Roy has extended his ministry in Lanett for several weeks while they continued preparations to move to their new home in North Alabama, and to allow for Wanda's recovery. They eagerly look forward to their move.

Bob and Beth Hurst Suffer Loss

We were saddened to hear of the death of Bob and Beth Hurst's granddaughter, Alaine, born prematurely on April 21 to Geoff and Corin.

Ozzie Schrag, Retired Professor from Fisk, Dies

Ozzie Schrag, a member of Brookmeade Congregational UCC and a long time professor at Fisk University, died on April 14th. He is survived by his widow, Orphea. Condolences may be sent to 3511 Echo Hill Road, Nashville, TN 37215.

UCC News

UCC Newsroom

Headlines from the United Church of Christ

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Latest News

Documents for Annual Meeting
Lodging Information
Workshops for the 2013 Annual Meeting
LGBT Ministry and Advocacy in the UCC
Pathways- A Sojourners' Community

Most Read Articles

UCC History and Polity
Southeast Conference UCC (SEC)
Southeast Conference Campaign
A Word From Tim Downs - March 2013
Steps to Planting a New Church

THE CENTER FOR PROGRESSIVE RENEWAL

SECUCC CONTACTS

- Conference Minister
- TAP Director
- SEC Donations
- Church Development
- Communications Director

SECUCC RESOURCES

- Annual Meeting
- Global Theological Education
- Local Church News
- SEC Churches
- Seminars/Webinars

FAVORITE LINKS

- Bridge 4 Faith
- The Center for Progressive Renewal
- United Church of Christ
- Mission Insite
- Resource Center

EVENTS CALENDAR

« < April 2014 > »

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	1	2	3

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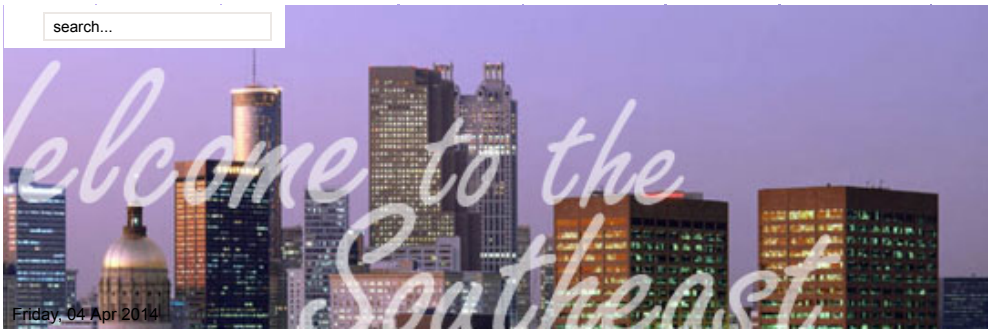

Flooding at Holy Trinity

Holy Trinity, Nashville affected by flooding last weekend.

Your Help is Needed!

On May 22, 2010 - Holy Trinity will be hosting a yard event…

Here's How UCC Churches Can Help: The staff at Holy Trinity Community Church (UCC) has let us know they can use our help with items for their yard event. A yard sale was planned for the weekend of May 7, but because of the flooding has been postponed until May 22, and has now been designated as a yard event to distribute household goods to folks who lost items in the flood.

Here is What is Needed: small appliances (ex. toasters, mixers, coffee pots, etc); bedding (sheet sets, blankets – clean, in good condition and clearly packaged and marked with the size); towels; other necessary household items; good furniture.

***PLEASE* donate only those items you would want in your own home.**
***PLEASE* be sure they are clean and clearly marked**
with size and quantity. We can't stress how important
it is that we NOT make any more work for the
Holy Trinity team by unloading unusable items.

Here is the Plan: Because storage space at Holy Trinity (HT) is limited the most helpful thing to do is bring the items to HT early in the morning of the yard event, May 22. If your congregation can help in some way please call or email the following HT folks. Steve Sipe, Jen Austin 615-352-3838 | admin@holytrinitycommunitychurch.com . For help with pick up call Patrick LaChance 615-545-1579

If your church plans to offer help would you please let the **SEC Disaster Assistance & Relief Team** so we can keep of list of the congregations who are able to help. Contact Connie Waidmann cbwaidphtn@frontiernet.net | 931 200 5556

Following the Yard Event: Holy Trinity has invited folks to join them for their Upper Room potluck event at 5:30 p.m. at First UCC, 3410 Granny White Pk. The Upper Room potluck is a regular event sponsored by the UCC churches in Nashville. We are all invited.

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Feature Focus - May

Open Table: A Community of Faith

A New UCC Church Start in Mobile, Alabama

by Ellen Sims

I am mid-wifing a new church because I believe the future of Christianity depends upon our ability to translate the hope of the Gospel for a postmodern culture. As Section 2 of the Preamble of the Constitution of the United Church of Christ affirms, it is "the responsibility of the Church in each generation to make this faith its own." But I am convinced by Phyllis Tickle and other culture-watchers that we are in an especially momentous "hinge" time. Therefore, our work to renew existing churches and create new churches requires substantive rather than stylistic reforms. Beyond the manner in which we worship, or how we organize a church, we need to claim and proclaim a progressive and inclusive theology that honors all creation, expands our vision of God, and fosters the interconnection between spiritual and social transformation.

Just over a year ago I enlisted ten unchurched people to help me plant a progressive theological seed into the conservative soil in Mobile, Alabama. I chose the location because it's where I live, it's the culture I know, and there's no church in our area that can reach the kind of people I'm called to serve. My unlikely co-laborers for this task include women and men who had sworn off church long ago. Yet these skeptical sojourners had the potential to imagine a community of faith that would pursue a common passion for social justice, feed their spirits, and forge them into a loving communion. They were bright and caring. They were countercultural and brave enough to take a stand for the good. I sensed that the Spirit was already at work in them and connecting us even though none of them had previously met one another. They include people raised as Methodist, Baptist, Catholic, Presbyterian, and AME Zion, and they are eager to welcome others of all races, economic classes, cultures, religious backgrounds, ages, and sexual orientations.

For three months we met in my home each Monday evening to share our stories and share our thoughts about a book we were reading together. Grounded in God, with its Quaker/Jesuit-influenced instruction in spiritual discernment for groups, helped us listen to one another and listen to the Spirit's leading in our midst. Also in those first months I introduced a new topic each week to cast my vision of church in bits and pieces, a "simple" church committed to 1) a love of God and God's world, 2) biblical

hospitality and inclusion, 3) Jesus' hopeful way into the future, 4) spiritual formation in tandem with social transformation, and 5) joyful and beautiful worship. Many of my core group also began reading books I was recommending—by Marcus Borg, Brian McLaren, Jack Spong, Walter Wink, Phyllis Tickle, etc. They were excited to learn about a Christianity they never knew could exist. And at the end of the first 3 months, I asked them (as I had told them I would do when I enlisted them) if they felt called to help me plan a new church. They all signed on for Stage 2.

For the next 6-8 months we did the foundational work for church planting: developing vision and mission statements and core values; researching and discerning denominational affiliation; creating a website and Facebook page. We found our first meeting space (or campaign headquarters, as one member put it), developed bylaws, filed our articles of incorporation, and opened a bank account. We developed a ministry plan, including our first budget and marketing plan. We used the Book of Acts to learn about the primitive church and begin Bible study with my core group, experimented with worship, etc. Just deciding on our name was a huge undertaking! Then we began research on ways we can best serve our community and engage together in advocacy and volunteering. Through all these processes, actions, and conversations, we've come to trust one another and share hopes and dreams for ourselves and our city. When Open Table: A Community of Faith determined to become the first UCC congregation in our part of the state, we did so because we believe the United Church of Christ is uniquely suited for moving the Church into the 21st century.

In October we began worshiping on the first Sunday of each month and meeting as a planning group on the other Sundays. In February we cut down on the planning meetings to just once a month. On the 2nd and 4th Sundays we offered the community the DVD- and discussion-based series Living the Questions, which we advertized in the local paper. Starting on May 16th we began offering a worship experience or program each Sunday at 4:00. 1st Sundays: a slightly liturgical worship service. 2nd and 4th Sundays: Living the Questions followed by a 10-15 minute devotional thought or spiritual exercise. 3rd Sundays: a Taize-inspired service of sung prayer, silence, and scripture. 5th Sundays: sharing our stories and a community meal. Responses to each of these offerings have been very positive, but our numbers remain low. However, my core group of leaders still is on a steep learning curve as we continue to return to questions like "How does one take the Bible too seriously to take it literally?" While we may not be ready yet for a large influx of new members, we have had as many as 25 people in worship. On most Sundays 15-18 gather.

We know we have a long ways to go before we quack like a church. We know our cultural context is not favorable for our type of church. Yet we also know that there are many in Mobile who hunger to be a part of an open, inclusive, justice-oriented community of faith that follows in the hopeful ways of Jesus. Our commitments to peace and justice in the world and spiritual growth in our own lives are interrelated and reinforcing. Members and visitors tell me about real changes in their personal lives as a result of their experiences at Open Table. The community is already seeing evidence of our work out there in the world.

I have tools that have helped me cast a vision of church, enlist and excite an unlikely team of church planters, and organize our early efforts. I also have tools to plan and lead vital and varied worship experiences, to develop congregational leadership, and train disciples and social justice advocates. In addition, my toolkit includes networks in the community and skills in relationship building. I spend a good part of my week meeting potential members over coffee.

The tools I will now develop will address the pragmatics of marketing and financing. My core members tell friends over and over again how much they love their church —which their friends find hilarious and intriguing since my core leaders have not been in church in decades. We are challenged to introduce the dechurched and unchurched to a different kind of church when 14 other new churches also claim to be "different." Those other new churches often mean their folks wear jeans to worship services dominated by a praise band, but they have not fostered theological inquisitiveness or a spirit of discipleship. To join us at Open Table, you don't have to check your brain at the church door. Theology and faith can remain rooted in Christian orthodoxy but be responsive to postmodern science and sensibilities. Our bumper sticker might say "we believe in the one true God; we just don't believe we are the only ones." Ironically, the people who would most love our vision of church are the very people who are least likely to visit us or see any need for church. But we continue to cultivate relationships and are eager to welcome more traveling companions on this journey of faith.

Note: Rev. Ellen Sims is the founding pastor of Open Table: A Community of Faith and recently completed the UCC History and Polity Course offered by the Southeast Conference. This article is adapted from a paper she wrote for the course. **>> Click Here** to link with Open Table: A Community of Faith

Latest News

- Documents for Annual Meeting
- Lodging Information
- Workshops for the 2013 Annual Meeting
- LGBT Ministry and Advocacy in the UCC
- Pathways- A Sojourners' Community

Most Read Articles

- UCC History and Polity
- Southeast Conference UCC (SEC)
- Southeast Conference Campaign
- A Word From Tim Downs - March 2013
- Steps to Planting a New Church

SECUCC CONTACTS

- Conference Minister
- TAP Director
- SEC Donations
- Church Development
- Communications Director

SECUCC RESOURCES

- Annual Meeting
- Global Theological Education
- Local Church News
- SEC Churches
- Seminars/Webinars

FAVORITE LINKS

- Bridge 4 Faith
- The Center for Progressive Renewal
- United Church of Christ
- Mission Insite
- Resource Center

EVENTS CALENDAR

« < April 2014 > »

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	1	2	3

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Southeast Conference FAQ's

- Who is the SEC?
- Who is the UCC?
- How Do I Find a UCC Church?
- What Ministries are Available?
- Is Training Available?

Conference News - May

"Behold! I Do A New Thing!"

REGISTER TODAY! - Southeast Conference Prepares for 44th Annual Meeting - *Click here*

June 10-12, 2010 | Church of the Savior | Knoxville, TN
Click here for ***Annual Meeting Information & Registration***
Click here for ***On-line Registration***
Click here for

CLICK HERE | SEC 2010 Meeting Materials

Lodging Information

Debbie Spearman Hired to Serve as Campaign Follow-up Director
The Southeast Conference is pleased to announce that Debbie Spearman has been hired to coordinate the follow-up to the Campaign to Transform Churches and Transform Lives. Debbie, a member of Central Congregational UCC, Atlanta, has recently served on the Board of Directors of the Conference. She is retired from directing a major marketing initiative with Kroger Markets, and brings to the Conference a love of the United Church of Christ, considerable expertise in marketing and development, and great gifts as a leader.

Southeast Conference Featured on UCC Bulletin Service
On May 9th, UCC churches across the country read the story of the Southeast Conference, its growth and vitality, and its efforts to enter a new stage of development through the Campaign to Transform Churches and Transform Lives.
>> Click here to see bulletin.

Southeast Conference Joins with Center for Progressive Renewal and UCC to Host Korean Pastors' Gathering
On April 20-22 in the Conference offices, the Southeast Conference participated in hosting a gathering of ten Korean pastors, six of whom are ministers in the UCC, and four who are seeking to join the UCC. There were five UCC churches represented, and three churches which will be requesting membership in the UCC, including one in the Atlanta area. The gathering was organized by Rev. Hojun Chang, a UCC pastor in Connecticut, with Rev. Sarah Kim, pastor of Salim UCC, in Roswell, and was sponsored by the Local Church Ministries of the UCC, the Center for Progressive Renewal, and the Southeast Conference.

The gathering provided an opportunity to hear presentations about UCC history and

UCC News

UCC Newsroom
Headlines from the United Church of Christ

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polity by Tim Downs, as well as others. They discussed the unique offerings the UCC has to bring to Korean immigrant communities as they face the social and cultural challenges in the United States. Pastors were gathered from the East and West Coasts, with four of the ten from the Atlanta area. Churches that will be seeking standing in the UCC are in the Massachusetts Conference, Central Atlantic Conference, and the Southeast Conference.

The gathering agreed to organize the Korean Church and Ministries, United Church of Christ. They will function to assist connecting Korean churches with the UCC, and will begin to develop interpretive materials, as well as history and polity materials, in Korean. There was also conversation about strengthening the community with a vigorous online presence. There was a sense in the group that this was only the beginning and that there are many other Korean churches across the United States that would welcome the openness and progressiveness of the UCC. Tim Downs noted that "the Southeast Conference is proud to support an effort like this, which is a part of reshaping of the UCC as it seeks to live fully into a multi-cultural multi-racial future."

Georgia-South-Carolina Association Holds Annual Meeting in Atlanta

On April 24th, over 50 people gathered for the Annual Meeting of the Georgia-South Carolina Association hosted by Rush Memorial UCC and Virginia-Highland Church, both of Atlanta. Held at Virginia-Highland, the theme was, "Neither death nor life will be able to separate us from the love of God." The meeting included workshops on extravagant welcome, reaching out to the unchurched, and how to develop effective church ministries. There was an update on the recovery of Haiti from the earthquake. At an ecclesiastical council, the association approved David Sigmund, a student in care and member of Kirkwood UCC, Atlanta, for ordination pending a call. David has moved to California.

The Association elected Cornelius Watts of First Congregational UCC, Atlanta, as moderator, and Dorothea Lotze-Kola, of Central Congregational UCC, Atlanta, as vice-moderator. They also elected Allen Mullinax of Pilgrimage UCC, Marietta GA; Andy Sidden of Garden of Grace UCC, Columbia, SC; Chris Mayer of Kirkwood UCC, Atlanta; and Ginnie Ferrell of Central Congregational UCC, Atlanta, to the Church and Ministry Committee.

The Campaign to Transform Churches Moves to a New Phase

The co-chair of our Campaign to Transform Churches - Transform Lives, Susan Mitchell, writes, "As we approach our Annual Meeting in Knoxville, June 12th, I am excited about the new things that God is doing in and through the Southeast Conference. I am excited because God is doing and going to do more than you or I can imagine. Just as Jesus transformed people through his words and action, we in the Southeast Conference continue to walk in that legacy as we strive toward our goal of, "Transforming Churches -Transforming Lives." It is going to take all of us and the "Willingness" to get involved and be actively engaged in the Mission and Ministry of the Southeast Conference. I believe we can do it! I have made my commitment! Join all of us who have made our commitments!"

Visitors to all of the churches of the Southeast Conference have contacted the churches to remind them that we would like to be able to announce their names as having made a pledge to the Campaign at our Annual Meeting, June 12th. Already we have raised over $190,000 in pledges, and many of our leading churches are working to determine their goal by June 1st. Co-chair of the campaign, Bob Watson, wrote, "We have been deeply moved by the warm and welcoming responses our churches have extended to our Campaign visitors. Transforming Churches, Transforming Lives will be our vessel to spread the good news of a God who welcomes all God's children, and offers the hope of a church that practices radical hospitality."

11 Year Reports on Churches of the Southeast Conference are Available

Annually the Southeast Conference receives 11 years of membership and financial information for each church in the conference. If you would like to review this information about your church, or any others, contact Tim Downs.

Southeast Conference Youth Ministry Leaders Attend Event in Cleveland

May 5-7, three members of the Southeast Conference attended a national event for UCC youth ministry leaders at the UCC headquarter in Cleveland, OH. Ginnie Ferrell from Central Congregational UCC, Atlanta, Aaron Carter from Victory Church, Stone Mountain, and Heidi Schuler form Pilgrimage UCC, Marietta, GA, were able to make the trip. Ginnie Ferrell wrote, "It was a real gift to gather with youth ministry leaders from across the UCC. It gave me renewed life as I watch youth leaders bringing a renewed spirit to the church. We were so fed by the hospitality of the national staff, and learned some many new ways to stay connected." The leaders hope to bring some program and ideas into the Annual Meeting of the Conference. The gathering resulted in a proposal to explore the staffing of youth ministries regionally with support from the national setting of the United Church of Christ. Aaron Carter writes, "I look forward to connecting our youth work with the youth ministries of the region and national settings of the United Church of Christ. I came back to Atlanta rededicated to doing my work with youth at Victory with excellence."

Alabama-Tennessee Annual Meeting | Celebrates Legacy of Caring

Over 100 people participated in the Annual Meeting of the Alabama-Tennessee Association at Pleasant Hill, Tennessee, hosted by the Pleasant Hill Community UCC, May 14 – 15, 2010. The meeting focused on health care issues, responded to the flooding in Nashville with an outpouring of contributions and supplies, celebrated the ecclesiastical councils for two candidates for ordination, and featured dynamic worship and the dedication of the new Wharton Home.

The meeting opened with a worship service on Friday evening at which Tom Warren, pastor of Pleasant Hill Community Church, preached, highlighting the identity of the United Church of Christ as a Jesus centered, justice seeking denomination. The leadership of the service was shared by candidates who were approved for ordination and students in care of the association.

The meeting included two ecclesiastical councils. In the first, Christophe Ringer, currently licensed for ministry as pastor of Howard Congregational UCC, Nashville, lifted up the United Church of Christ as a mosaic, bound in covenant, and one in which he had been inspired by the African-American leaders who had shaped the denomination over the years. At the second ecclesiastical council, Lillian Hallstrand Strahine spoke of the radical hospitality and love of justice in the UCC, which drew her to seek ordination. She honored the Baptist theologian Walter Rauschenbusch and her mother Sarah Hallstrand, an ordained Baptist minister. Both Christophe and Lillian are graduates of the Vanderbilt Divinity School, and Christophe is in a PhD program. Lillian has been called to serve as a chaplain at the Vanderbilt Medical Center.

The Association gathered on Saturday morning for a service of dedication of the new Wharton Home in the Braun Cottage, named in honor of Dick Braun, the medical director of the current Wharton Home. Organized around the Eden Alternative, a form of elder care that is based on a non-medical model, the Wharton Home seeks to create a living environment that respects the dignity of all residents. The

service featured greetings from Bill Johnson and Bill Royster, representing the Council for Health and Human Services Ministries of the UCC, and an address by Conference Minister Tim Downs, who spoke of the Eden Alternative as a witness not only to compassionate care, but to justice for our elders. Following this, there were workshops on the new health care initiatives of the federal government, palliative care, and other health related issues.

This meeting also celebrated 125 years of ministry of Pleasant Hill Community Church. A festive and energetic atmosphere permeated, including a parade of flags and banners from the Fletcher House to the Wharton Homes on Saturday morning.

Latest News

- Documents for Annual Meeting
- Lodging Information
- Workshops for the 2013 Annual Meeting
- LGBT Ministry and Advocacy in the UCC
- Pathways- A Sojourners' Community

Most Read Articles

- UCC History and Polity
- Southeast Conference UCC (SEC)
- Southeast Conference Campaign
- A Word From Tim Downs - March 2013
- Steps to Planting a New Church

SECUCC CONTACTS

- Conference Minister
- TAP Director
- SEC Donations
- Church Development
- Communications Director

SECUCC RESOURCES

- Annual Meeting
- Global Theological Education
- Local Church News
- SEC Churches
- Seminars/Webinars

FAVORITE LINKS

- Bridge 4 Faith
- The Center for Progressive Renewal
- United Church of Christ
- Mission Insite
- Resource Center

EVENTS CALENDAR

« < April 2014 > »

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	1	2	3

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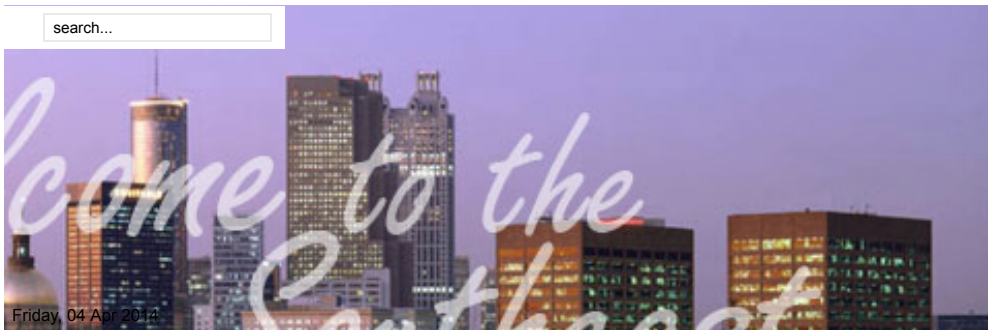

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Celebrations - May

UCC Minister Gail O'Day Named Dean of Wake Forest Divinity School

Gail O'Day, who has served as the Senior Associate Dean of Faculty and Academic Affairs, and A.H. Shatford Professor of Preaching and New Testament at Candler School of Theology, has been named dean of the Wake Forest University School of Divinity beginning on August 10th. Gail, who is a member of Central Congregational UCC, Atlanta, has been on the faculty of Candler since 1987.

Chris Glaser Completing Interim Ministry at Virginia-Highland Church

Chris Glaser, who has served as interim minister at Virginia-Highland Church (A Baptist and UCC Congregation) is completing his contract at the end of June. Chris, a well known theologian and author, will return to his career as a writer. He is in the process of exploring ministerial standing in the United Church of Christ.

Rob Hunter, Privilege of Call Candidate, Called to Church in Michigan

Rob Hunter, who recently secured privilege of call in the United Church of Christ, has been offered a call to serve First Congregational UCC, St. Clair, MI. Rob had served on the staff of the Cathedral of the Holy Spirit in Decatur, was a graduate of Oral Roberts University, and most recently has worked with the staff at Central Congregational UCC, in which he is a member. He and his wife Zully are eager to begin this new ministry in June.

John Gill, Church of the Savior, to be Married

John Gill, who has served as pastor of Church of the Savior UCC, Knoxville, has announced that he will be married to Deborah Cliburn, a member of Church of the Savior, Roswell, GA, in the beginning of July. John and Deborah met during a TAP Global Theological Education event in Thailand. They will live in Knoxville. Our congratulations to them and their families.

Ken Samuel Elected to UCC Board of Office of General Ministries

We are pleased to announce that Ken Samuel, the pastor and founder of Victory Church UCC, Stone Mountain, GA, has been elected to the Board of Directors of the Office of General Ministries of the UCC. Ken joins other leaders of the Southeast Conference in serving in the national setting of the UCC. They include Elizabeth Clement, a member of First Congregational UCC, Atlanta, who not only serves on the Board of the Office of General Ministries, but also on the Unified Governance Working Group; Dorinda Broadnax of Community Congregational UCC, Montgomery, who serves on the Executive Council; Susannah Davis of Kirkwood UCC, Atlanta, on the Board of Local Church Ministries; Marcia Bentley of First Congregational Christian UCC, Birmingham, on the Board of Wider Church Ministries; and John Gill, Pastor, Church of the Savior UCC, Knoxville, on Justice and Witness Ministries.

Georgia-South Carolina and Alabama-Tennessee Committees on Ministry Updates

On April 24th, the Georgia South Carolina Committee on Ministry granted student in care status to Kim Sorrells, a member of Central Congregational UCC, Atlanta. Kim is currently enrolled at Candler School of Theology.

Over the last several months, the Alabama-Tennessee Committee on Ministry has acted to grant Roger Knight, Gilbert Miller, and Roy Siewart ordained ministerial standing. Roger is the retired conference minister of the Southeast Conference. All three are residents of Uplands Retirement Village in Pleasant Hill, TN. The Committee has recommended Lillian Hallstand Strahine, a member of Brookmeade

UCC News

UCC Newsroom

Headlines from the United Church of Christ

Oklahoma City church continues legacy of dedicated member

Stephanie Telleen chose to remember Mayflower Congregational United Church of Christ in her will when she passed away, leaving her half-million dollar estate to the church. Now the Oklahoma City church will use that estate to remember Telleen for her selflessness and generosity by funding two missions close to her heart.

THE CENTER FOR PROGRESSIVE RENEWAL

Congregational UCC, Nashville and Christophe Ringer, pastor of Howard Congregational UCC, Nashville, to an ecclesiastical council of the Association for consideration for ordination. Both were approved for ordination at the ALA-TN Association meeting in May.

Latest News

- Documents for Annual Meeting
- Lodging Information
- Workshops for the 2013 Annual Meeting
- LGBT Ministry and Advocacy in the UCC
- Pathways- A Sojourners' Community

Most Read Articles

- UCC History and Polity
- Southeast Conference UCC (SEC)
- Southeast Conference Campaign
- A Word From Tim Downs - March 2013
- Steps to Planting a New Church

SECUCC CONTACTS

- Conference Minister
- TAP Director
- SEC Donations
- Church Development
- Communications Director

SECUCC RESOURCES

- Annual Meeting
- Global Theological Education
- Local Church News
- SEC Churches
- Seminars/Webinars

FAVORITE LINKS

- Bridge 4 Faith
- The Center for Progressive Renewal
- United Church of Christ
- Mission Insite
- Resource Center

EVENTS CALENDAR

« < **April 2014** > »

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
30	**31**	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	**1**	**2**	**3**

Steps to Planting a New Church News Contact Us Donate

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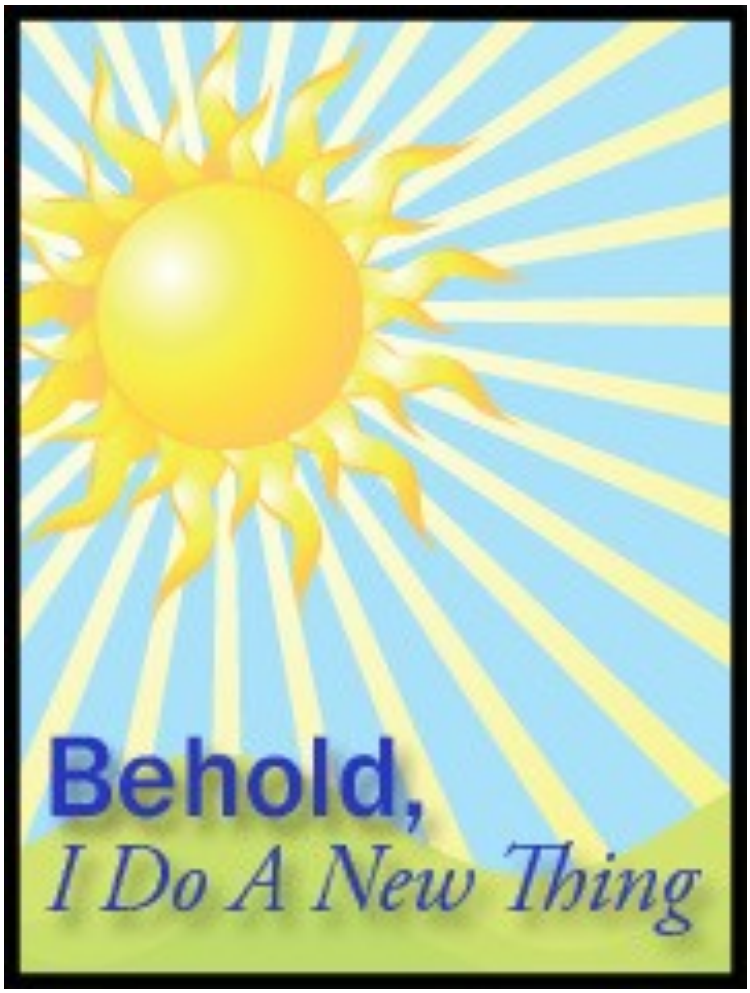
44th Annual Meeting
June 10—12, 2010



Hosted by
Church of the Savior
United Church of Christ
934 N. Weisgarber Road
Knoxville, TN 37909
(865) 584-7531
www.cos-ucc.org

PREACHERS & CONVOCATION LEADERS

Rev. Dr. Valerie Bridgeman is the Associate Professor of Hebrew Bible/Homiletics and Worship and Scholar of Theology and the Arts at Lancaster Theological Seminary. She earned her M.Div. from Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary (1990) and her Ph.D., Baylor University (2002). Dr. Bridgeman is the founding director of the Return Beat Theology & Arts Institute and its programs in Memphis, TN, and has served as general editor and consultant for the United Methodist Church's Africana Worship project, which yielded three worship resource books and a collection of scholarly essays on worship. In addition, she is an acclaimed published poet, with her latest poems appearing in a volume on which she shares the dust jacket with Maya Angelou, *Risk, Courage, and Women: Contemporary Voices in Prose and Poetry* (University of North Texas Press). As an interdisciplinary scholar, Dr. Bridgeman is active in three professional guilds and has been inducted into the Society for the Study of Black Religion. She is the author or editor of numerous volumes, articles and essays on the Hebrew bible, worship, preaching and art.

Dr. Bridgeman is an ordained minister of the Church of God (Anderson, IN); she served as an associate pastor or pastor for more than 25 years. As a part of her ministry, she founded the "Tribe," a collective of multi-media young artists who use art as a spiritual discipline in service to ending violence among young adults, especially gang members. Dr. Bridgeman is a peace activist and advocate for human rights.

In addition to preaching on Thursday evening, Dr. Bridgeman will also lead a **Convocation** on Friday morning.

As Senior Pastor, **Rev. Dr. Jo Hudson** is the spiritual leader of the Cathedral of Hope in Dallas, TX, and, in partnership with the Vision Team, serves as the keeper of the Vision of the Cathedral. Rev. Hudson focuses internally on discipleship with the purpose of empowering the people of the local church to grow in their faith as individuals and as a community.

Before coming to Cathedral of Hope, Rev. Hudson spent 7 years as pastor of Friends Congregation Church-UCC in College Station, TX. A native Texan, Rev. Hudson received her Ph.D. in Educational Administration from Texas A&M University in 1993 and graduated with honors from Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University in 1994. She was ordained into the United Church of Christ in 1997. Currently, Rev. Hudson holds clergy standing in the North Texas Association of the South Central Conference of the United Church of Christ. In 2001 Rev. Hudson received a Pastoral Renewal Grant from the Lilly Endowment Inc., which promotes leadership education and financial self-sufficiency in the nonprofit, charitable sector.

Rev. Hudson was elected as Senior pastor of the Cathedral of Hope on February 6, 2005. She and her partner Stephanie have a 3-year-old daughter named Sydney.

Rev. Hudson will lead a **Convocation** on Friday afternoon and will be our Keynoter and Preacher on Friday evening.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

(Please note: Knoxville, Tennessee is on Eastern Time.)

Thursday, June 10, 2010

5:00 PM Gather

6:00 PM Theology Among the People Banquet (**invitation only**)

7:30 PM Worship & Theology Among the People Graduation—Preaching: ***The Rev. Dr. Valerie Bridgeman*—"Just Praise"**

Friday, June 11, 2010

8:00 AM Registration Opens
Continental Breakfast

8:45 AM Child Care Opens **(See Child Care Request Form on Page 7)**

9:00 AM Leadership Convocation — **Dead Man Talking: The Testimony of Resurrection Faith—*The Rev. Dr. Valerie Bridgeman***

10:00 AM Break

11:45 AM Child Care Closes

Noon Lunch

12:45 PM Child Care Opens

1:00 PM Leadership Convocation — **The Gift of Change**
The Rev. Dr. Jo Hudson

2:00 PM Break

2:15 PM SEC Board of Directors Meeting

3:45 PM Child Care Closes

4:00 PM Hearings and/or Workshops

5:30 PM Dinner

7:00 PM Registration Closes & Child Care Opens
Welcome & Worship—
Preaching: ***The Rev. Dr. Jo Hudson*—"Move Your Stake!"**

8:30 PM Break—Child Care Closes
Ice Cream Social & Fellowship with Music

Saturday, June 12, 2010

8:00 AM Registration Opens
Continental Breakfast

8:45 AM Registration Closes & Child Care Opens

9:00 AM Memorial Service

9:30 AM Recognition of Anniversaries of Ordinations, New Clergy, Retiring Clergy, etc.

10:00 AM Break

10:15 AM Business Meeting — Call to Order

12:45 PM Business Meeting — Adjourns

1:00 PM Lunch—Child Care Closes

2010 TAP Leadership Convocation

For all clergy and laity of the Southeast Conference.

Friday, June 11, 2009—Part I—9:00 AM – 11:45 AM

Keynote: Dead Man Talking: The Testimony of Resurrection Faith—
Presented By: *The Rev. Dr. Valerie Bridgeman*

The work of ministry is not always convenient. Those in love and service with Christ must attend to the ongoing and emergent needs of the world to which we are called. The story of Jesus' intervention for the widow of Nain gives us several principles on which to reflect and by which to consider our work.

Friday, June 11, 2009—Part II—1:00 PM—3:45 PM

Keynote: The Gift of Change—Presented By: *The Rev. Dr. Jo Hudson*

One of the greatest challenges facing churches today is the inability to change. In the midst of a culture that is changing by the millisecond, churches tend to be mired in "the way we've always done it" mentality. The question for faithful people seeking to have vibrant, viable churches today is: "How do we maintain the stability of our church while at the same time embracing new ways of doing things, new people who arrive to join us in the journey and new opportunities that God presents to us?" This convocation will attempt to respond to that question and offer some suggestions as to how we not only honor our ancient past and the faith of our forebears, but how we become the church of Jesus Christ for the 21st century and beyond as God seeks to do a new thing in our midst.

Cost: $75 includes continental breakfast, lunch, and dinner.
(Included in the Annual Meeting registration fee of $100.)
Register on Annual Meeting Registration Form or on-line at www.secucc.org.

Child care will be available at a minimal charge if requested in advance.

See Child Care Request Form on page 7.

MEMORIAL SERVICE

Over the years, one of the special moments of the Annual Meeting is a time when congregations come forward to read the names of those of their members who have died in the previous year. We encourage all of you to come prepared to participate in the memorial service, which will take place on **Saturday morning, June 12th.** Each congregation should have **one** designated representative to read the names of the saints who have passed on.

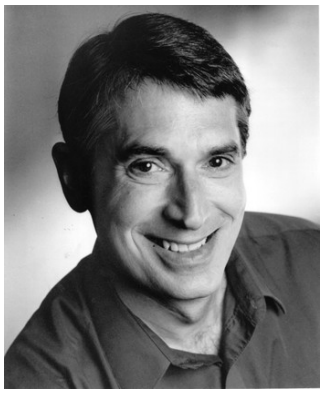
MUSIC

The **LONETONES** (***Steph Gunnoe***—guitar, vocals; ***Sean McCollough***—guitar, banjo, mandolin, vocals; ***Maria Williams***—bass, vocals; ***Steve Corrigan***—drums glockenspiel; ***Lissa McLeod***—accordion, keys) are a Knoxville, TN band that plays original, Appalachian roots-based music that goes well beyond the "tradition." They've been called modern folk, Americana, folk rock, "an Appalachian Belle and Sebastian…."

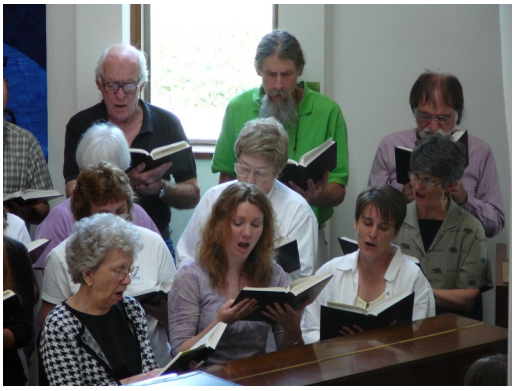
They have three albums to their credit that have garnered national attention. Their music has been played on radio stations around the world and enjoys regular play on Knoxville stations.

Visit their website **www.thelonetones.com**

Mezzo Soprano, ***Karen Nickell*** came to public attention with her professional debut in the title role in Peter Brook's acclaimed Lincoln Center production of "LaTragedie de Carmen." She has performed operatic roles throughout the United States.



An exciting and commanding figure in opera houses and concert halls throughout the world, bass-baritone ***Andrew Wentzel*** was declared a "vocal standout… who alone achieved a touch of human emotion through strong, sensitive singing" by *Opera News* following performances of Banquo in *Macbeth*.



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Knoxville, TN 37909

(865) 584-7531

www.cos-ucc.org

(directions available from website)

LODGING

NOTE: Attendees must make their own lodging arrangements.

Rate cut-off date is May 27, 2010 or when properties are booked. Reference SECUCC when making your reservations. Both properties have a smoke-free policy.

Courtyard Knoxville Cedar Bluff—216 Langley Place, Knoxville, TN 37922—865-539-0600—$89 + tax—king or double room. Free high-speed Internet access, 24 hr. business center, large in-room workstation, outdoor pool and spa, 24-hour fitness center and complimentary in-room coffee/tea and coffee maker.

TownePlace Suites Knoxville Cedar Bluff—205 Langley Place, Knoxville, TN 37922—865-693-5216—$89 + tax—studio with queen bed and fully equipped kitchen. Complimentary high speed Internet and WiFi, 24-hour fitness center, and outdoor pool.

On-line registration and meeting materials will be available on the Southeast Conference website at www.secucc.org. Please print and bring your own meeting materials, as needed.

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: JUNE 4, 2010

Annual Meeting Registration Form

(Complete one form per person, copy form as needed. On-line registration is available at www.secucc.org.)

Please print clearly.

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Daytime telephone #: _____ **Email address:** _____

Church (name & city): _____

Prices include meals & programming.

Reserve a place for me at the following:	**AMOUNT**
Friday, June 11, 2010 only—$75.00	_____
Saturday, June 12, 2010 only—$30.00	_____
Both days—$100.00	_____
Total Enclosed	_____

(check one)

_____ **Minister (with standing in the Southeast Conference)**

_____ **Church Delegate**

_____ **Visitor (clergy, lay person)**

_____ **Conference Board Member**

Do you have any dietary restrictions? _____

On-line registration and meeting materials will be available on the Southeast Conference website at www.secucc.org. Please print and bring your own meeting materials, as needed.

Child care (under 8 years of age) will be available at a minimal charge if requested in advance.

I/We _____ will need child care for
(name of parent/guardian)

_____ _____
(name & age of child) (name & age of child)

During the following hours: * Thursday: _____ 5:45-9:15 pm * Friday: _____ 8:45-11:45 am 12:45-3:45 pm_____ 7:00-8:30 pm * Saturday: _____8:45 am-1:00 pm

Return by June 4, 2010

All checks should be made payable to the Southeast Conference. Indicate Registration in the memo line and mail them with your forms to: Southeast Conference UCC, 1330 West Peachtree Street, NW., Suite 350, Atlanta, GA 30309-2904.